

YOUTH SPIRIT PROGRAM



Adaptation Note:
*Native Transformation
Opioid Project (SITC) &
We R Native Facilitators
Guide on Healthy Native
Youth*

Chapter 6: Staying Safe - Suicide Prevention





The goals of this chapter

...is to learn about what suicide prevention means. Youth will learn what increases and decreases the chance of suicide (in themselves and others) and will learn how to help themselves and others stay safe. Youth will find out about local resources and also talk about what role alcohol and drugs play in increasing the risk of suicide.

Age Groups: Middle and High School Youth

Time: 35 minutes

Youth will:

- define suicide prevention
- identify risk and protective factors
- describe cultural teachings that can help us stay emotionally healthy
- describe resources

Materials

- Youth Handouts
- Question Box/ paper
- Coast Salish Sources of Strength book
- 10 Sticky notes per student for ice breaker and activity 2
- Poster with circle and Four Sources of Strength (Spiritual, Community, Family, Individual) labeled
- Some way to put up poster, depending on space being used
- My3App on phone
- Pens/pencils

Preparation

- Preview Lesson plan
- Consider inviting mental health backup, in case youth need to step out at any time
- Read and become familiar with Coast Salish Sources of Strength book and family, community, individual and spiritual domains
- Put the My3App on your phone and become familiar with it
- Print two resource cards per student, one for themselves and one to pass on
- Know local resources for youth to contact to help themselves or a friend
- Become familiar with the Crisis Textline & 988
- Preview the Handouts for this lesson to determine what is most appropriate for your youths' levels and your goals. Print enough copies of the lesson handouts for each youth.

Cultural Component Option(s)

Note: additional time needed for this activity

Materials

- A print-out of the booklet, "The Swinomish Totem Pole: Tribal Legends"



Welcome & Group Check in

5 minutes

Welcome youth, introduce yourself, have guest speakers and youth introduce themselves and direct youth where to sit.

Say, "Before we continue, do you have any questions or comments about the last chapter?"

Say, "Today we are going to talk about the challenges people face and suicide prevention. I want to let you know that at any point in time if you would like to step out for any reason, (insert) is here and talk with you in the (insert – e.g. hall). Why is this important to discuss?"

Affirm the answers given.

Question Box Q&A

Respond to questions left in the question box

Icebreaker

Time Varies

Give each youth a small stack of post-it notes and a pen or marker.

Say, "Let's talk about ways that our friends can strengthen us or be positive peer role models. On your own, think about someone close to your age (a peer) who has helped you or has been a positive influence on you. Once you have someone in mind, write down one thing they did to support you or help you be your best or how they influenced you positively. Write each way they supported you on a separate post-it note and stick it up here on the board. Write as many as you can!"

Pause to give youth a few moments to think and write ideas. Once they have; put their ideas on the board.

Ask, "Would anyone like to share something that your friend or peer has done- in just a few words- to strengthen you?" or "What do you notice about qualities and actions of friends that strengthen us?"

Thank youth for participating in the discussion.



Doodle Page

Feel free to draw while you listen.
It can help you learn better!



Suicide Prevention & Native Risk Factors

5 minutes

Say, "Suicide prevention is about becoming aware of the risk factors in ourselves and others and taking steps to help or get help by using our strengths and resources. You may have heard that suicide rates among American Indian/Alaska Native people are higher than the rest of the population. Even though there are currently higher rates of suicide in Native communities, there was never a word in our language for "suicide" because it did not occur. It is not part of our Native culture."

Say, "Our goal is to help you identify risk factors in advance and develop your own plan that can help you get through challenging emotions and times (e.g. life preserver, stormy seas, waves of emotion, etc.)."

Ask, "What do you think a risk factor is?"

Allow time for responses.

Say "Yes, those are great definitions."

Repeat the responses and add anything that might be missing from this definition:

Say, "Risk factors for suicide refer to personal or environmental characteristics that are connected to suicide. People affected by one or more of these risk factors can have a greater chance of suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Abusing alcohol or drugs is an example of a risk factor."

Say, "Studies have shown that there are some additional risk factors for suicide among American Indian/Alaska Native people that other ethnic/racial groups may not experience. Historical trauma, loss of cultural traditions, values and culture, negative boarding school experience, feeling disconnected from family, discrimination have all contributed to these unique risk factors. What do you think about when I talk about suicide rates being higher for Native youth?"

Allow time for responses.



Protective Factors Activity

10 minutes

Say, "What do you think a protective factor is?" *Allow time for responses. Affirm responses.*

Repeat the responses and add anything that might be missing from this definition:

Say, "Protective factors are personal or environmental characteristics that help reduce the chance of suicide. Protective factors can buffer the effects of risk factors. The ability to resist the effects of risk factors is known as resilience."

Say, "Our culture is a protective factor. That is why we say, *Culture is Prevention*. There are four areas where Coast Salish people gain their 1) strengths, 2) our family, our community and culture, from 3) ourselves and from our 4) spirituality. Many of our activities increase resilience and serve as protective factors. Can you think of other examples?"

Allow time for responses. Distribute and discuss Cultural Activities Known to Contribute to Resilience.

Say, "One example of a cultural teaching that fits in many areas is the idea that youth (you!) are sacred because you are the future of the communities. You should be protected at all costs."

Say, "On your tables, you will see sticky notes and pens. When I tell you, I am going to ask that you write your own example for each of the four areas, on each sticky note, and put them in the circle in the area they relate to: 1) family 2) community 3) yourself and 3) spirituality. Some things may go in more than one place."

Say, "Here are some questions to get you thinking: What does your family do to help you and others stay emotionally healthy? What things does your community do that helps individuals feel supported and healthy? What cultural activities do you do that help you?"

Allow time for responses.

Say, "Do you have any questions before we start? OK, please start."

Provide help to students who are having trouble thinking of examples. The goal is for everyone to put one in each category, try to have everyone put up at least one in the circle.

Give group a one-minute warning. When the one minute is up...

Say, "Great job thinking of examples. Who can share what examples they put up?"

Cultural Activities Known to Contribute to Resilience

Research studies have found that positive identification with tribal culture acts as a protective factor against youth suicide.

Kinship/Family/Gender Roles

- Participating in extended family culture and traditions
- Learning about family structures and village concept
- Maintaining strong family ties
- Hearing or telling family stories (knowing their lineage and cultural history)
- Participating in traditional male and female roles, (comparative historic and new)
- Searching for a connection with relatives or Native ancestry
- Contributing as a nurturer or provider for family and community

Tribal Arts and Crafts

- Making cradleboards and dream catchers
- Making handheld or box drums, wooden or shell rattles, flutes, whistles
- Making tools of various means
- Weaving of wool, cedar bark and other natural materials
- Making shawls, sewing quilts
- Carving utility, ceremonial or decorative objects
- Weaving of baskets for all purposes
- Making jewelry, beading, shell work,
- Gathering of traditional materials needed for various arts
- Making natural dyes for patterns and design and paint
- Designing, drawing, painting of artwork

Tribal Clothing

- Making traditional regalia for potlatches, pow-wows and other ceremonies
- Making moccasins, tanning hides, working with animal skins
- Wool skirts, tunics, leggings, shawls and headbands
- Woven cedar bark hats, tunics, vests, headdress, body ornament
- Feather dance fans
- Shell necklaces, earrings and other jewelry

Subsistence/Food/Medicines

- Gathering, harvesting, planting, growing, preserving, or cooking traditional foods
- Hunting, fishing, exercising treaty rights
- Knowing or participating in hunting/gathering-related ceremony
- Knowing plants, bark, roots, herbs, medicines
- Learning and teaching about plants, animals, foods, and medicines
- Traditional knowledge of seasonal harvesting
- Propagate resource areas to preserve and maintain abundance

Music/Dance/Pow-wows

- Learning and teaching of traditional songs and dances
- Learning lyrics or specific dances and the history behind songs and dances
- Learning song etiquette: where and when a song can be sung
- Dancing, drumming, singing at canoe journeys, potlatches, ceremonies and community celebrations

Games/sports

- Playing culture-specific traditional games such as slahal and come forth laughing
- Playing indigenous sports such as lacrosse and canoe racing

Cultural Activities Known to Contribute to Resilience

Research studies have found that positive identification with tribal culture acts as a protective factor against youth suicide.

Ceremony, Rituals, and Protocol

- Participating in traditions, knowing how to act, how to prepare, how to follow protocol
- Participating in fasting, smudging, meditation, visioning, prayer
- Paying attention to dreams
- Participating in a talking circle
- Practicing Native protocol for showing respect and honor
- Developing communication skills with elders
- Practicing spirituality
- Learning about Shaker Church, Smokehouse or other religions
- Knowing and practicing protocols for handling sacred or ceremonial items
- Showing respect for beliefs at ceremony
- Seeking traditional healers for help
- Learning rules for who can attend ceremonies
- Knowing passing away ceremonies,
- Knowing sacred animals
- Knowing sacred sites and why they are sacred
- Understanding people's interconnectedness with the natural world, themselves and others

History/Cultural Knowledge/Cultural Skills

- Knowing tribal history, laws, treaty rights, traditional territory, clans
- Knowing the meaning of sovereignty
- Learning Tribal names for places
- Speaking your Native Language
- Knowing sacred places—protecting them as cultural monuments
- Learning about traditional dwellings; houses/buildings/longhouses/villages
- Understanding the impact of colonialism—genocide, boarding schools, illegalization/banning of our cultural practices
- Understanding the history of activism, acts of protesting
- Understanding sport mascots, stereotypes and their negative impact

Traditional Forms of Living

- Learning to keep oral traditions alive by telling tribal stories and legends
- Understanding the modern day canoe journey and the impact upon our culture
- Understanding the cultural seasonal rounds, paying attention to nature's timetable
- Understanding the animals and what they do how they can symbolize a season
- Understanding our family ties with other tribal communities and how we share resources
- Taking care of Mother Earth, family, self and others



Resources

5 minutes

Say, "Can you think of any other suicide prevention resources that are part of our community? Familiarize yourself with local resources, here are some local resources (insert - e.g. Mental health counselors, Prevention Specialist, Intervention Specialist, School Counselor, etc.)."

Say, "We are also part of a community that is bigger than where we live. Sometimes we need to get help from the bigger community for ourselves or for others. Here are some other resources. There's the My3app, which is a free app you put on your phone. A person puts their safety network of people and their contacts and their plan to stay safe."

Show the My3app app.

Say, "Other resources are the Crisis Text Line. Just text NATIVE to 741741 for free 24/7 counseling support, or dial/ text 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline."

Say, "Just knowing these resources isn't enough, we need to use them. And sometimes it's hard to ask for help. Can you think of some ways to make it easier to talk to someone?"

Allow time for responses. Consider sharing challenges that you have had when reaching out for help.

Say, "Those are some great ideas. Here are some more:

- Choose a safe person
- Be a safe person
- Bring a friend when you go talk to someone
- Be a friend
- Be honest
- Listen"

Say, "Congratulate yourself on doing something positive for yourself or someone else."

Closing and Final Reflections

5 minutes

Distribute the handout - What have I learned today? Encourage youth to write what they have learned. If necessary, draw on the board and give the youth a few examples of what they may have learned from this chapter.

Say, "Thank you so much for being part of this important conversation. I hope you have learned something you can use to help yourself or a friend. What is something new you learned today? What is something you can share with friends, family and your community from today's lesson?"

Pass out For Native Youth resources.

Say, "Next time we will talk about how to help a friend."

Mention the next meeting time, location and the topic that will be covered, if applicable.

If time allows, close with a poem, song, story or tradition that highlights the activity concept.



Chapter 6
Youth Handout
#2

Journal Space

What have I learned Today?

Think about your mental, spiritual, social, and physical self.
Then draw, doodle, or write about what you have strengthened
today.

If you or a friend are in crisis, we've got your back!



Scan the QR code using your phone for Native Youth Support Resources



FOR NATIVE YOUTH

Reach out for Help When you Need to

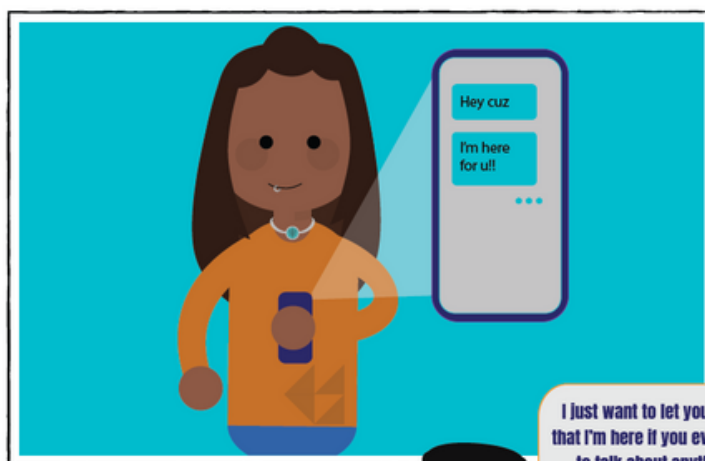
We all need a little support from time to time. No worries! You're not alone. If you or a friend are in crisis...

Text "Native" to 741741 , or Dial/ Text 988 for free 24/7 counseling support

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

You can help those you care about by letting them know you're around if they need to talk. Need support? Talk to a trusted adult for help.



I just want to let you know that I'm here if you ever want to talk about anything, big or small.

#WeRNative

#CaringMessages

#CrisisTextLine

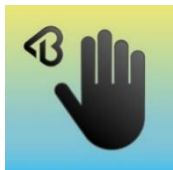


NPAIHB

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Better Stop Suicide

- Calming audio files
- Gratitude checklist
- Key phone contacts
- Built-in alarm clock
- Records life-saving message
- Helpful tasks to feel better



Virtual Hope Box

- Distract Me
 - Puzzles: Sudoku, photo And word searches
- Inspire Me
 - Read powerful quotes
- Relax Me
 - Controlled breathing, muscle relaxation, guided meditation
- Coping Tools
 - Coping cards, activity planner



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Zero
Suicide
Alliance

Because
ONE life lost
is **ONE** too many

Mental Health Wellness & Recovery Phone Apps



Free information on phone apps for
Apple© and Android© supported devices

STEP 1

Complete a Safety Plan

What is a Safety Plan?

- A personalized and practical plan that can help you avoid dangerous situations and know the best way to react when you are in danger.
- Best developed in partnership with a mental health clinician, and updated as your social network, warning signs, and coping skills change.
- Write it down on paper first!
- Try your best to create a plan that you would be willing to use/refer to upon during a crisis.
- Your plan should consist of brief instructions, using your own words, and should be easy to read.

A Safety Plan may consist of...

- Warning signs or triggers
- Soothing activities or coping skills
- Supportive contacts
- Your outpatient networks
- Crisis line(s)
- Reasons for living
- Ways to keep yourself safe

STEP 2

Pick 1 or more apps

Safety Plan

- o Feature in Mood Tools
- o Quick access to just your safety plan
- o Easy to update as you get better



MY3

- o Store your information confidentially
- o Get support at times of greatest risk
- o Access to the National Suicide Lifeline 24/7



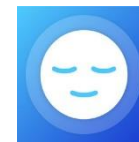
MoodTools

- o Depression specific, types of therapies...
- o PHQ-9 - track or set reminder
- o Guided meditation, soothing sounds, TED talks
- o Record thoughts and emotions, challenge your thinking
- o Activities to improve mood
- o Have your safety plan handy



MindShift

- o Thought journal, coping cards
- o Mindful recordings between 2-6 minutes
- o Face your fears by identifying steps, identify challenges and do them, review your healthy habits



SuperBetter

Live Gamefully®

- o Bringing the same mindset and psychological strengths naturally displayed when playing games - such as optimism, creativity, courage, and determination - to real life
- o Build and track four types of resilience



What's Up?



Help Right Now
Everything you need to keep calm right here



Coping Strategies
Thinking Patterns, Metaphors, Manage Worries & Positive Steps



Information
Anger, Anxiety, Depression, Self Esteem & Stress



Personal
My Diary, Positive Habits, Negative Habits & My Notes